

SOCIAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

PUBLISHED MONTHLY, EXCEPT JULY AND AUGUST, BY THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL EDUCATION AND
SOCIAL ACTION, DIVISION OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION, THE UNITED CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY
MISSIONS BUILDING
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

222 DOWNEY AVENUE

PRICE: \$1.00 PER YEAR INCLUDES SOCIAL ACTION RESEARCH BULLETIN

NO. 7 VOL. IV

JULY-AUGUST 1941

COMMITTEE ON CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS ORGANIZED

At its meeting in Indianapolis on June 12 and 13, the Board of Trustees of the UCMS took action authorizing the formation of a Committee on Conscientious Objectors by the Department of Social Welfare. When the Selective Service Act was passed it was first thought that all matters relating to conscientious objectors among Disciples of Christ could be handled by the department as a part of its regular routine. Later, when a committee was formed to study the problem of religious service to men in camps it was asked to assume responsibility also for giving guidance in matters relating to conscientious objectors. Experience has proved however that the two tasks are not sufficiently related to justify being delegated to the same committee. Therefore an entirely new committee was authorized to handle matters relating to conscientious objectors and the committee on religious service to men in camps will give its entire time to problems relating to churches in camp communities.

The Committee on Conscientious Objectors will study the problem of conscientious objection among Disciples of Christ, work out plans whereby men of our churches given the conscientious objector classification by the Selective Service Administration can be assigned to Civilian Public Service Camps, advise the department of social welfare in its work on behalf of these men, and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees on matters of policy. The following persons have been named to membership on the committee: F. E. Davison, South Bend, Indiana, Harold L. Lunger, Oak Park, Illinois, Mrs. A. J. Culler, Cleveland, Ohio, Henry M. Johnson, Louisville, Kentucky, Myron Taggart Hopper, Lexington, Kentucky, and Willard M. Wickizer and James A. Crain, Indianapolis, Indiana.

With a considerable number of the 800,000 men of the first draft not yet assigned to camp and with approximately a million young men who have reached the age of 21 since October 16, 1941 called to register on July 1, it is probable that a considerable number of conscientious objectors will be assigned to camp during the summer months. This will require continuous readiness on the part of church groups to meet situations which it was expected would arise earlier. The Board of Trustees also voted to ask the Commission on Budgets and Promotional Relationships to approve continuation of the special appeal for funds for conscientious objectors.

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS OF RACE AND COLOR

From two important cities in different parts of the nation come reports of unusual tributes paid by the white citizens of the community to Negro citizens in recognition of outstanding achievement.

From Fort Wayne, Indiana comes a story of unusual courage and pluck in the case of Samuel E. Stuart, Jr., Negro high school student who not only was chosen by his classmates at Central High School to be class valedictorian, but was one of 39 high school graduates in the nation to receive a Harvard scholarship with a maximum stipend of \$1,000 for the first year and \$1,200 for each year thereafter. An infantile paralysis victim, young Stuart was supplied with transportation to and from school by one of Fort Wayne's service clubs. He was not only an outstanding student, but also participated in debates and other extracurricular activities.

From Memphis, Tennessee comes the story of high honor paid to two Negro citizens. When 84-year-old Louieco M. Ballard ended 63 years of service with the M. E. Carter Co., a cotton firm, the officers and employes of the company gathered at an evening meeting to pay honor to him. He began work for the company in 1878 and had been employed continuously since. He will draw a pension from the company in addition to his Social Security benefits.

Also from Memphis comes the story of a special meeting of the Shelby County Bar Association in the Chancery Court to pay tribute to the memory of B. F. Booth, Negro lawyer and member of the bar. The Chancery, Circuit, and Probate courts recessed while judges, attendants and about 40 attorneys eulogized their departed colleague. Characterized by County Attorney King as "an honor to the Bar Association," by Probate Judge Bates as "capable, competent, and energetic," by Chancellor Lois Bejach as "a high class honorable man who merited the consideration of such a meeting" and by Circuit Judge Hamner as a man who was never accused of making a misrepresentation, the bar voted to frame resolutions of respect to his memory.

It is the responsibility of the church to encourage men everywhere to pay tribute to personal worth and achievement wherever it is found. No group has a right to ask more and no group can claim to be Christian and do less.

Widespread social maladjustment is being created by the rapid expansion of national defense, according to an address delivered by T. J. Woofter, Jr., director of research for the Federal Security Agency, before the National Conference of Social Work at Atlantic City on June 5.

Mr. Woofter declared that 70% of the primary defense contracts are in 20 communities. This has already resulted in a marked migration of skilled workers to these industrial areas, with every indication that the movement will increase as demands for special types of workers increase. The Social Security Board estimates that labor shortages may appear in some of these communities before the end of the year. In Detroit nearly 150,000 workers will be absorbed into employment in 1941, half of whom will have to come from outside the commuting area. Philadelphia will require nearly 170,000, of whom an estimated 70,000 will have to be imported. In 68 labor market areas in which labor surveys have been made, with a population of 16,831,000, a million persons will be absorbed into employment during this year, of whom 350,000 will have to be imported. These estimated are for the more or less permanent defense industries and do not include construction workers on military camps and workers rushed in to build defense communities like Charlestown, Indiana. It is estimated that about half of these industrial workers drawn into defense industrial centers will be married and that each will bring with him an average of 1½ dependents, thus adding another 612,000 persons to the influx. This includes only the necessary migration for defense employment in the 68 areas studied and takes no account of the large number of service workers that may be needed as the result of population expansion in these communities or of migrants who may be attracted by rumor or mass advertising.

In addition to this movement of skilled labor, several other types of migration have been noted. There has been a large increase in population of communities adjacent to military training camps. Some military authorities claim that during World War I, the growth of civilian population of camp communities was 1½ to 1 of the camp personnel. In the present emergency it is estimated that there will be one new civilian in the community for each man in camp. But whatever the ratio, it is already apparent that many camp communities are being overrun by the families of the men in camp and others attracted to the community by reason of the presence of the soldiers. In some communities the congestion is especially heavy on weekends. In the second place, the building of cantonments and defense industries has induced a heavy movement of construction workers. At the peak of activities nearly three-quarters of a million workers were engaged in building defense facilities. In addition to these migrations which represent rational effort on the part of men to better their economic condition there has been an irrational movement based on "hunch and hope" - the migration of thousands who have almost lost hope of ever getting a job again and move from place to place in search of work.

(continued on page 4)

On Feb. 13, 1941, Senator Sheppard of Texas introduced S.860 designed to forbid the sale of intoxicating liquors to members of the land and naval forces of the United States near camps, cantonments and naval bases and to provide for the suppression of vice in the vicinity of military camps and naval establishments. The Bill gives the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy authority to establish zones in the vicinity of camps and naval establishments in which the sale of liquor is forbidden and within which prostitution is to be suppressed and provides penalties for violation. Upon the death of Senator Sheppard, Senator Edwin C. Johnson of Colorado took charge of the Bill.

The House passed HR 2475, introduced at the request of the American Association of Social Hygiene. This Bill embodies Section IV of the Sheppard Bill providing for the establishment, near camps and bases, of prohibited zones for prostitution, but making no mention of liquor. The Army gave its approval to HR 2475, but disapproved The Sheppard Bill (S.860), urging that the sections having to do with the prohibition of the sale of liquor within prohibited zones near camps and bases be deleted. This would leave the men in the camps and bases protected against prostitution, but not against liquor. Referred to the Senate Military Affairs Committee, both bills were reported without recommendation. On the floor of the Senate, Senator Johnson secured an amendment to HR 2475 which substituted for it the language of S.860. Since it was Unanimous Consent Calendar Day, the objection of a single senator would require that it be held over and come up on the regular Calendar. Senator LaFollette of Wisconsin supplied the objection. That means that the Bill must await the slow grind of the legislative mill and come up for debate when it is reached on the regular calendar. In the meantime alarming reports are being received of conditions of liquor and vice in the neighborhoods of some of the camps and bases where a million young men are being trained for national defense. Write your Senator today urging that action be taken on HR 2475 as amended.

Indicative of the need of protection against prostitution (and also against liquor, since liquor is an accompaniment of vice) is the report of the American Social Hygiene Association that the syphilis rate for the adult population of the United States for the years 1935 to 1940 was 3.24 percent. The calculations were based upon blood tests given to 1,897,599 persons throughout the country. The examinations showed the highest rate to be found among jail inmates, (19.75%), domestic servants coming second with 11.70%; relief groups third with 9.16%; barbers and beauticians fourth with 5.75%. Hospital patients showed 5.56%, industrial workers 5.45%, midwives 5.26%, life insurance applicants 1.00%, and students lowest of all, with .37%. The care taken to protect the men of the army from this disease is reflected in a percentage of 1.72 of those to whom the test was applied. Liquor and prostitution are twin evils and thousands of young men away from home and from normal environment for the first time should be protected from both.

ON SOCIAL FRONTIERS

Reports from Rome dated May 24, indicate further tension in relations between the Vatican and the Nazi regime in Germany. A Nazi order to all Catholic periodicals, bulletins, and newspapers to cease publication on June 1, is the basis of the difficulty. The concordant between the Vatican and the Berlin regime guarantees liberty of the Catholic press. Several journals have been suppressed and it is now proposed to wipe out all Catholic publications.

Figures released by the Interstate Commerce Commission covering 3,706 highway-railroad crossing accidents in 1940 show that 1,303 of them, or 35%, were caused by vehicles running into the side of trains. In these accidents 283 persons were killed and 1,925 injured. Of the fatalities, 99 occurred in daylight & 184 at night. Of the 1,925 injuries, 361 occurred in daylight & 1,564 occurred at night. In 244 accidents of this nature the trains were reported to be standing still when hit. In 645 of them the motor vehicles were reported to be running faster than 30 miles an hour. Illinois lead the nation with 120; Mich., next with 113; Calif., with 75; Ind., was fourth with 74.

Rumors that business interests are indulging in the same sort of trading in death that was revealed following World War I have caused Senator Gillette of Iowa to declare that he will press for a Congressional investigation. Asserting, "It is a strange thing that we are spending such vast sums to aid one side in the war and that we still allow war materials to go to the Axis countries," the Senator declared that motor fuel supplied by U.S. companies has been leaving Latin American ports for Germany & Italy. He also asserted that despite Japanese threats to British holdings in the Far East, oil from the Dutch East Indies is being sold to Japan and is being transported and refined by British and American companies, and that Japan is now running what is virtually a ferry service to transport shipments of oil from the greatly increased supplies of oil made available to them by U.S. oil companies on the West Coast since the first of the year. "We are now paying royalties to Germany on every inch of special glass used in the manufacture of our airplanes. We are also paying royalties to Germany on a substance used in making airplane wings."

The same old story. While the U.S. hovers on the brink of war, American industrialists in the name of profits continue to supply the fuel that enables Japan to bomb defenseless China. What could be more cynical than the fact that German interests are paid royalty on every fighter plane supplied to Britain or to our own defense forces? All in the name of "defense!"

When Oglethorpe County, Ga., plantation owners were in Chicago recently to ask extradition of Negroes on charges of being fugitives from justice they found themselves indicted on charges of peonage. A Chicago lawyer, formerly of Oglethorpe Co., in defending his clients found evidence that they fled the state not as fugitives from justice but as fugitives from peonage. He brought the matter to the attention of the federal grand jury and the indictments resulted.

FORD WORKERS VOTE TO ORGANIZE

What the United Automobile Worker, organ of the UAW-CIO called "the greatest single labor board election in history" took place in Detroit on May 21 when nearly 80,000 workers of the Ford Motor Co., in obedience to a ruling of the National Labor Relations Board balloted on the question of unionization. Ford has been one of the strongest citadels of anti-unionism in this country and the campaign to unionize his plants has been marked by frequent outbreaks of violence. The campaign began in conflict some 3 years ago when a group of CIO organizers were attacked and beaten while handing out handbills at the entrance of the River Rouge plant. Since that time violence has flared in a number of places. The Detroit election was ordered after a turbulent strike in April which tied up millions of dollars worth of defense contracts. Union leaders have charged that the anti-union policies of the company, backed by the administrative policies of Harry Bennett, personnel manager and director of the company's effective "service" organization have been responsible for the trouble. Company officials have charged that efforts to unionize the workers was Communist inspired, that union organizers were attempting to browbeat their workers and that their men were satisfied with wages and working conditions.

Two days after the Detroit election the NLRB handed down its 9th decision against Ford, when it ordered immediate reinstatement with back pay for 975 workers in the Ford plant in Kansas City and directed that 46 other workers be restored to their jobs on application. The Board found that after a seasonal shut-down the Kansas City plant re-opened, hiring only "Blue Card" of company union men, though the majority of the workers were members of the UAW-CIO.

The Detroit election was preceded by a campaign in which the UAW-CIO and the UAW-AFL were pitted against each other and in which mass meetings, radio, newspapers, and even airplanes were brought into play to persuade voters for the competing unions. Final returns gave the UAW-CIO an overwhelming victory in spite of reports that the UAW-AFL had the Bennett blessing. Official tabulations showed that in the River Rouge plant at Dearborn the vote was 51,866 for the UAW-CIO, 20,364 for the UAW-AFL, and 1,958 for no union at all. In the Lincoln plant the vote was: UAW-CIO 2,008; UAW-AFL 587, and 146 for no union. The pattern-makers at the River Rouge plant, voting on a separate ballot went UAW-CIO 161 to 90 for the AFL group.

Certain facts are apparent from these figures. First, Ford employees unquestionably want a labor organization to protect their interests, in spite of the myth that Ford is an ideal employer and the father of high wages for industrial workers. When 75,000 workers out of a total of 77,180 vote for some form of union organization no one can claim that they do not want a union or that they are being forced into it against their will. It is significant that only 2,104 were willing to continue without union representation. In the second place, the election is significant of the

(continued on page 4)

Social problems arising (continued from page 2)

These migrations have produced some serious social dislocations. First, there is the relief problem. Since the liquidation of the FERA a transient who moves outside his own state loses eligibility for aid, since assistance is now handled through state welfare organizations. A second serious social maladjustment is that of housing. The sudden influx of workers creates a housing shortage, resulting in overcrowding, use of substandard housing and other makeshifts. The government has appropriated \$150,000,000 to provide 36,000 defense housing units, but that is only a drop in the bucket. Already deficiency appropriations have been asked to provide an additional 35,000 units, and even this will not solve the problem. The Surgeon General of the U.S. Public Health Service, on his return from a recent trip to England, said that sanitary conditions in some American industrial boom towns are worse than in the low grade bomb shelters in England. Rents in some areas have increased from a third to a half. Rents paid by Negroes have been raised more than in the case of white tenants. In some areas furniture prices have advanced as much as five percent.

A third problem is that of public health. In some communities the sudden expansion caught the population without adequate water supply and sewerage--or with none at all. Sanitation at once became a problem. In many communities no provisions exist for inspection of food, milk, or water. Only in the larger centers are hospital and clinical facilities anything like adequate. The defense program has resulted in a revival of prostitution on a large scale. Women have flocked into both industrial and camp communities. Adaptation of the trailer to dwelling purposes has intensified the problem of control. Recreation is another serious difficulty. The leisure hours of men on leave in camp communities and of workers open the way in small communities for all sorts of anti-social developments.

One of the most critical situations is that faced by education. It is estimated that the schools adjacent to Mare Island Navy Yard in California will be called upon to care for 5,000 additional pupils, 3,500 in the elementary division and 1,500 in the secondary division. A survey of existing facilities on December 1, 1940 indicated that 300 additional elementary pupils and 300 additional high school students could be cared for. Of the 5,000 new homes in the area, it is estimated that 3,400 are not subject to local or state taxation and 1,800 are not subject to immediate taxation. Yet these communities must provide for 3,200 additional elementary pupils, and 1,200 additional high school students. This situation in communities adjacent to Mare Island Navy Yard may be taken as representative of conditions in other defense areas.

On top of all this, it is necessary to begin to plan for post-war conditions. When liquidation of this giant program begins the situation is likely to be more serious than it was in 1920-1921, and may be as disastrous as the depression of the 1930's. Many of these communities will shrink rapidly and unless wise planning is provided now great hardship will ensue.

WAR DEPARTMENT DEFINES "NON-COMBATANT SERVICE"

In response to requests for definition of non-combatant service as applied to conscientious objectors who are inducted into the military service as non-combatants, the War Department has issued a bulletin defining the types of service to which such persons may be assigned.

According to regulations persons who accept induction into the military service as conscientious objectors may be assigned to the following units and installations:

1. Field forces. (a) Medical Department - assignment permitted to any unit. (b) Quartermaster Corps - assignment permitted to any unit except those organically assigned to divisions or smaller units. (c) Chemical Warfare Service - assignment permitted to decontamination companies only. (d) Signal Corps - assignment permitted to following types of units only: construction units, photographic units, depot units, repair units, pigeon units. (e) Corps of Engineers - assignment permitted to any unit except the following: combat units, general service units, pontoon battalions, separate battalions.

2. Corps Area Service Commands and War Department overhead. Assignment permitted to any unit or installation except the following: (a) replacement center units of infantry, cavalry, field artillery, coast artillery corps, ordnance department, and armored force. (b) military police units.

(continued from page 3)

trend in mass production industry. Whatever may be the merits of craft unions for such trades as barbering, carpentering, etc., industrial workers feel that the industry in which they are employed is more significant from a trades-union standpoint than is the particular craft to which they belong. This goes a long way toward settling the CIO-AFL controversy as it affects mass production industries. In the third place, there is much truth in the assertion of President R. J. Thomas of the UAW-CIO that "the result of the election marks the end of an era in American industry" and that it means "the defeat of the type of uncompromising anti-unionism represented by Henry Ford."

SECTION 562 P. L. & R

Department of Social Education & Social Action
222 Downey Avenue Indianapolis, Indiana